

STATE ARCHIVES OF MICHIGAN
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RURAL PROPERTY INVENTORIES

The Depression period found many surveyors, engineers, land appraisers, and other trained Michigan citizens out of work. At the same time, it became clear to tax administrators and government officials that there was a dearth of basic data, particularly in the state's non-urban areas, upon which to establish uniform assessment rates. In an effort to employ this unused skilled labor force, and to create a comprehensive source of information about real and personal estates, the Rural Property Inventory was established. This undertaking, sponsored by the State Tax Commission in cooperation with the Works Progress Administration (WPA Project S-110), was started late in 1935. Employing about 2,000 "white collar" workers throughout the state, the Inventory was designed to prepare detailed descriptions of all 1,500,000 distinct parcels of land in the rural parts of Michigan (excluding Wayne County). Cards (about 8x10 inches) were created for each piece of property, providing such facts as description, ownership, utilization, and improvements. This massive undertaking--the first of its kind in the nation--continued until 1942, when the last of the 1,249 township involved in the project were surveyed. Though the data entered on these records is now obsolete, the details they reveal serve to provide a remarkably sharp picture of the character of Michigan country life a half-century ago. The collected data describes lands; buildings; fences; crops; woodlands; means of communication; sources of heat and light; number of school district; legal description of the land; name of village, township and county wherein located; name and post office address of individual assessed; together with amount of acreage within certain classifications. Classifications are; "A" agricultural; "B" special agriculture; "C" swamp; "D" commercial orchard, vineyards and berries; "E" forest and timber areas, farm woodlot and cutover; and "Other" (sugar bush, road, marsh, lake, waste and recreational).

Sketches of house and general land area are included. Building description includes type; year built or remodeled; dimensions in linear and cubic feet; condition and type of foundation; kind of exterior and roof; type of floor; and nature of utilities. Buildings of lesser importance--such as cribs, poultry houses, garages, fruit storage, and the like--are described by brief narrative. Farm fences are described by kind and condition of fence and posts. The "woodlot and forest timber tally" offers type, board feet, cord, stem cut and density. Valuations placed by board of review are occasionally included.

In the listings on the back of this sheet, the holdings for any given county may be incomplete. Most are arranged alphabetically by name of township, then numerically by section number. The maps that are associated with these records can be found in RG 94-438.

| <u>COUNTY</u> | <u>DATES</u> | <u>RG#</u> | <u>LOCATION</u> |
|---------------------------|--------------|------------|-----------------|
| Alcona | 1938-1939 | 84-33 | State Archives |
| Alger (Limestone Twp.) | 1938-1954 | 98-47 | State Archives |

| <u>COUNTY</u> | <u>DATES</u> | <u>RG#</u> | <u>LOCATION</u> |
|-------------------|--------------|------------------------|-----------------|
| Antrim | 1936-1942 | 72-76 | State Archives |
| Arenac | 1936-1942 | 72-76 | State Archives |
| Barry | 1939 | 89-25 | State Archives |
| Bay | 1936-1942 | 72-76 | State Archives |
| Calhoun | 1936-1942 | 72-76 | State Archives |
| Charlevoix | 1937-1939 | 75-70 | State Archives |
| Cheboygan | 1937-1939 | 94-380 | State Archives |
| Chippewa | | | State Archives |
| (Raber Twp.) | 1938 | 94-381 | State Archives |
| Crawford | 1936-1942 | 72-76 | State Archives |
| Dickinson | 1936-1942 | 72-76 | State Archives |
| Eaton | 1939 | 94-303 | State Archives |
| Emmet | 1936-1942 | 72-76 | State Archives |
| Genesee | 1936 | 81-52 | State Archives |
| Gladwin | 1936-1942 | 72-76 | State Archives |
| Gogebic | 1936-1942 | 72-76 | State Archives |
| Grand Traverse | 1936-1939 | 84-55 | State Archives |
| Hillsdale | 1936-1942 | 72-76 | State Archives |
| Houghton | 1936-1942 | 77-105 | MTU Archives |
| Huron | 1936-1942 | 72-76 | State Archives |
| Ingham | 1936-1942 | 72-76, 83-88, 88-25 | State Archives |
| Ionia | 1937-1938 | 54-10, 66-73 | State Archives |
| Iosco | 1936-1942 | 72-76 | State Archives |
| Iron | 1936-1942 | 72-76 | State Archives |
| Isabella | 1935-1942 | 72-65, 72-76 | State Archives |
| Jackson | 1936-1942 | 72-76 | State Archives |
| Kalkaska | | | |
| (Clearwater Twp.) | c. 1937 | 2000-70 | State Archives |
| Keweenaw | 1936-1942 | 84-71 | State Archives |
| Lake | 1936-1942 | 72-76 | State Archives |
| Lapeer | 1936-1942 | 72-76 | State Archives |
| Lenawee | | | State Archives |
| (Ogden Twp.) | 1938-1939 | 94-307 | State Archives |
| Luce | 1936-1942 | 72-76 | State Archives |
| Mackinac | 1936-1942 | 72-76, 84-70 | State Archives |
| Mason | 1936-1942 | 72-76 | State Archives |
| Mecosta | | | |
| (Austin Twp.) | 1936-1942 | 72-76 | State Archive |
| Menominee | 1938 | 70-118 | State Archives |
| Midland | 1936-1939 | 76-88 | State Archives |
| Monroe | 1936-1942 | 72-76, 84-27 | State Archives |
| Montcalm | 1938-1939 | 94-339 | State Archives |
| Montmorency | 1936-1942 | 72-76 | State Archives |
| Newaygo | 1936-1942 | 72-76 | State Archives |
| Oakland | 1936-1942 | 72-76 | State Archives |
| Oceana | 1936-1942 | 72-76 | State Archives |

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|-------------------|-----------|---------------|----------------|
| Ogemaw | 1936-1942 | 72-76 | State Archives |
| Ontonagon | 1936-1942 | 72-76 | State Archives |
| Ottawa | 1936-1942 | 72-76 | State Archives |
| Otsego | 1936-1942 | 72-76 | State Archives |
| Oscoda | 1936-1942 | 72-76 | State Archives |
| Osceola | 1936-1942 | 70-112 | State Archives |
| Presque Isle | 1940 | 69-46 | State Archives |
| (Bearinger Twp.) | | | State Archives |
| (Metz Twp.) | | | State Archives |
| Saginaw | 1937-1938 | 70-89, 71-146 | State Archives |
| Sanilac | 1936-1942 | 72-76 | State Archives |
| Schoolcraft | | | State Archives |
| (Germfask Twp.) | 1938 | 94-394 | State Archives |
| Shiawassee | 1936-1942 | 72-76 | State Archives |
| St. Clair | | | State Archives |
| (East China Twp.) | 1938 | 64-13 | State Archives |
| St. Joseph | 1938 | 72-76 | State Archives |
| Tuscola | 1935-1938 | 70-113 | State Archives |
| Van Buren | 1935-1938 | 72-76 | State Archives |
| Washtenaw | | | State Archives |
| (Lyndon Twp.) | 1938 | 90-283 | State Archives |
| (Northfield Twp.) | 1937-1938 | 2000-69 | State Archives |
| (Pittsfield Twp.) | 1938 | 70-87 | State Archives |
| (York Twp.) | 1936-1938 | 71-139 | State Archives |